



Capitol Report

February 8, 2024

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Dear Neighbor,

As many of us prepare for the big game on Sunday, there is good news for working families with children coming out of Jefferson City.

I am pleased to share with you some basic information about the Child Care Tax Credit passed out of the House today.

- This bill helps working families.
- The Child Care Tax Credit empowers all parents, but especially mothers. The COVID-19 pandemic saw hundreds of thousands of parents leave the workforce, and while men were able to return to work relatively quickly, women are still struggling to return to work as the burden of child care disproportionately falls on their shoulders. A child care tax credit can
- A child care tax credit helps the economy by expanding the workforce. Businesses are still suffering from a labor shortage, even as real wages have increased and the unemployment rate has hit record lows. A lack of affordable child care is one of the main barriers to get back into the workforce, so giving parents some tax relief to better afford care and giving child care centers tax relief to run those businesses benefits the economy.

This bill represents the right way to provide tax relief. Targeted tax credits focused on helping working class families are a much better way to stimulate the economy than eliminating the corporate income tax or broad income tax reductions that jeopardize the state's bottom line.

Republicans continue to oppose common sense measures like this, and the 50 Democratic votes in the House were sorely needed to get this bill across the finish line. The bill now heads to the senate for its approval.

Yours in Service,

Rich

House Legislative Dashboard



Let's Go Chiefs!







**Former U.S. Senator Roy Blunt
visited with me this week.**



House approves three new child care tax credit programs

The Missouri House of Representatives on Feb. 6 voted 113-39 to send legislation to the Senate creating three new tax credit programs to help reduce Missourians child care costs. While support for the bill was bipartisan, only Republicans voted against the bill.

One program would allow taxpayers to claim a credit equal to 75 percent of a verified contribution to a child care provider. Another would grant employers who pay for child care for their employees a credit equal to up to 30 percent of its employer withholding tax. The final program would allow child care providers to claim tax credits on their employer withholding tax and offset up to 30 percent of their capital improvement costs with credits.

According to the bill's official fiscal estimate, the new credits would cost the state a total of \$70 million a year in lost revenue. The legislation is House Bill 1488.



House panel approves effort to override court rulings on fees

The House Pensions Committee on Feb. 6 voted 8-0 in favor of a proposed constitutional amendment that seeks to circumvent Missouri Supreme Court precedent holding that surcharges imposed on court cases violate the open courts provision of the state constitution unless the revenue is used for judicial operations. The measure can now advance to the full House of Representatives for debate.

House Joint Resolution 92 would ask voters to amend the open courts provision to authorize court surcharges raising revenue for salaries and benefits for current and retired county sheriffs and prosecuting attorneys. While state Supreme Court precedent has prohibited levying court fees for non-judicial purposes for about 40 years, HJR 92 was specifically prompted by a 2021 decision striking down a \$3 surcharge on traffic offenses to provide funding for the Missouri Sheriff's Retirement System.

Although HJR 92's purpose is to authorize a funding source for law enforcement and local prosecutors that is currently deemed unconstitutional, the ballot language written into the measure by its sponsor instead asks voters if they want "to preserve funding of law enforcement personnel for the administration of justice" without mentioning that an unrestricted amount of new court fees could be imposed as result. If approved by both legislative chambers, HJR 92 automatically would go on the Nov. 5 statewide ballot for voter ratification.



Senate blocks rape, incest exceptions to state's abortion ban

The Republican-controlled Missouri Senate on Feb. 7 rejected Democratic efforts to create exceptions for cases of rape or incest to the state's strict law banning abortion. However, the chamber failed to advance the underlying bill that seeks to prohibit Planned Parenthood clinics in the state from participating in Missouri's Medicaid program.

Because abortion is illegal in Missouri in nearly all instances, the local Planned Parenthood clinics do not perform them and instead provide a variety of other women's health services for which they are entitled to receive Medicaid reimbursements. However, since Planned Parenthood locations in other states do provide abortions, Republican lawmakers have unsuccessfully sought for years to keep any state funding from going to the organization.

Senate Bill 1168 would prohibit health care providers from receiving Medicaid reimbursements if they are affiliated with an out-of-state abortion provider. Democrats attempted to add amendments to the bill to allow abortions in Missouri in cases of rape or incest, but majority Republicans voted them down. After several hours of debate, the Senate couldn't overcome a Democratic filibuster and set aside the bill without taking a final vote. However, it could return to the measure later.

The Senate debate took place one day after the launch of an initiative petition asking voters to amend the Missouri Constitution to protect reproductive rights, including abortion. Supporters must turn in signatures from a minimum of about 185,000 registered Missouri voters by early May to qualify for the Nov. 5 statewide ballot.



Chief justice seeks better mental health care for defendants

Missouri Supreme Court Chief Justice Mary Rhodes Russell on Feb. 7 asked state lawmakers to increase state funding for mental health programs for defendants jailed while awaiting trial. Russell made her comments during the 50th annual State of the Judiciary Address before a joint session of the General Assembly.

"Our jails have become the largest mental health facilities in our counties," Russell said. "But that is not how jails are designed, nor how their staff are trained. Jails should be used in the short term to detain people accused of crimes or found guilty of minor crimes. Concrete cell blocks are not conducive for treating mental health or addiction issues."

Russell also discussed the benefit of pretrial diversion programs for defendants who aren't jailed but require assistance with mental health issues. In addition, she asked for increased legislative support for improving mental health services and security in juvenile detention centers.

Russell, who is in her 20th year on the state Supreme Court, is serving a rare second term as chief justice, a post that rotates among the court's seven members every two years. She previously was chief justice from 2013-2015. Only a few judges in the court's history have held the post twice.



Missouri Supreme Court Chief Justice Mary R. Russell addressed a joint chamber of the legislature this week during the State of the Judiciary address.



State revenue collections down slightly so far in FY 2024

Year-to-date net state general revenue collections decreased 0.2 percent through the first seven months of the 2024 fiscal year compared to the same period in FY 2023, going from \$7.61 billion last year to \$7.59 billion this year, according to revenue data reported on Feb. 7 by the Missouri Division of Budget and Planning. Collections had

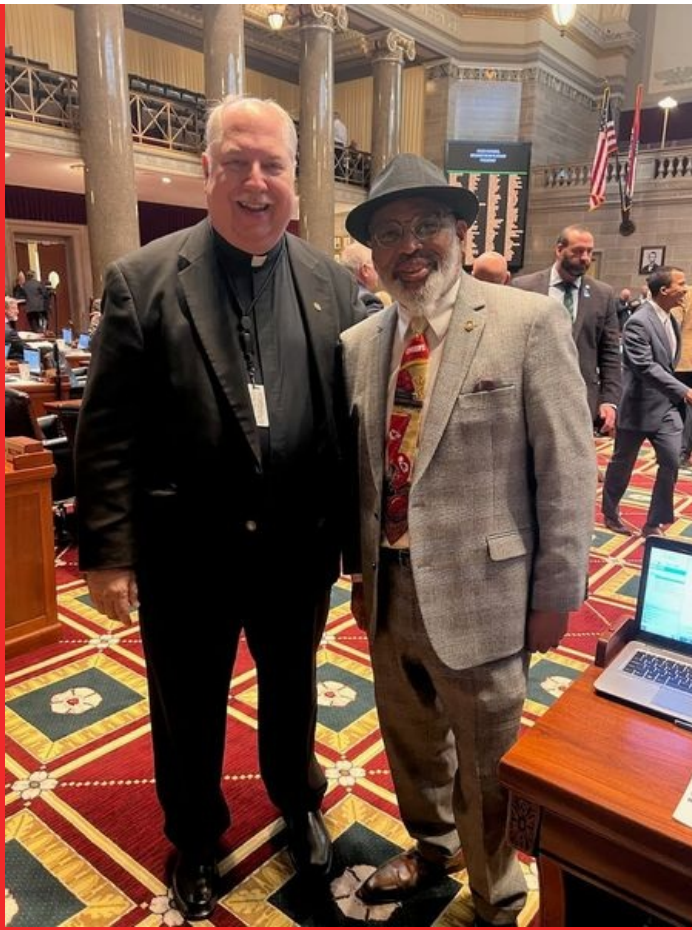
been down 1.7 percent through the first six months of the fiscal year.

Net general revenue collections in January 2024 increased 6.3 percent compared to those for January 2023, going from \$1.37 billion last year to \$1.45 billion this year. Strong growth in sales and use tax collections helped offset a continuing decline in individual and corporate income taxes resulting from recently enacted cuts.

Although the original consensus revenue estimate for FY 2024 predicted revenue growth of 0.7 percent for the year, the latest revised estimate issued in December now predicts a 0.7 percent decline in collections by the time the fiscal year ends on June 30.



Evie Craig (far right) and Missouri Citizens for Arts visited the Capitol to request more funding for the arts in particular for schools. As a retired Speech & Drama teacher, I fully support their cause.



Rev. Msgr. Robert A. Kurwicky and I have forged a friendship over my legislative career. He leads the House in prayer each day before the start of our daily session.



I met with Missourians from across the state this week to continue the good fight for healthcare, children and local communities.

REAL ID

Are you ready?



Beginning **May 7, 2025**, residents of every U.S. state and territory will be required to present a REAL ID-compliant driver license or ID card, or another form of ID accepted by the Transportation Security Administration, to board federally regulated domestic flights.

Individuals must also present a REAL ID-compliant driver license or ID card to access federal facilities, including military bases and federal courthouses, and to enter nuclear power plants.



Missouri's REAL ID-compliant driver licenses and non-driver ID cards will have a **star** in the upper right-hand corner. A license or ID card that is not compliant with REAL ID will have **"Not for REAL ID Purposes"** in the upper right-hand corner.

For more information, including where to obtain your REAL ID, visit dor.mo.gov

Save a life. Register to be a donor. 
Visit missouriorgandonor.com for more information.

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Communication Specialist * Fleet Operations * Building
Operations * Analyst * Administrative and Fiscal
Administrators * THE LIST GOES ON!!!!

www.careers.kcpd.org/

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF
REVENUE 

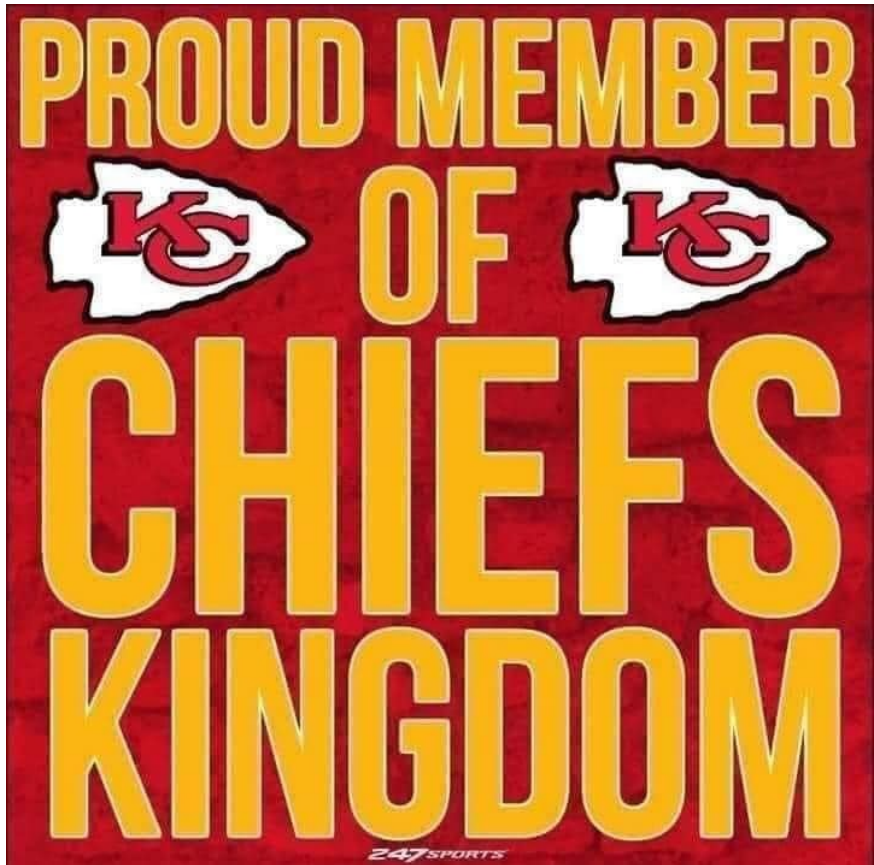
Are you eligible to utilize DOR's **FREE online filing** method to submit your Missouri Individual Income Tax Return?

[Click for more information](#)



COMMUNITY NEWS AND HAPPENINGS





DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS

FREE College Workshop for High School Seniors featuring:

-  **ACT Prep**
-  **FAFSA Assistance**
-  **Scholarship Application Assistance**

 **SATURDAY**
FEB 10 2024

 **UNITED BELIEVERS CHURCH**

2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

5600 E 112TH TERRACE
KANSAS CITY, MO 64137

REGISTER NOW!

SCAN QR CODE OR VISIT
[SCHOLARSMARTS.COM/UPCOMING](https://scholarsmarts.com/upcoming)



FREE HOT CHOCOLATE,
COOKIES & RAFFLE PRIZES
FOR ATTENDEES!

Join us to experience the
**POWERFUL
STORY ^{OF THE}
NEGRO LEAGUES**



↔ FREE ADMISSION FOR FEBRUARY ↔

Want lower electric bills?

Share the Sun can help. Share the Sun is a free solar energy program to reduce energy burdens. Eligible homeowners can receive a 10-panel, 4-kW solar energy system with a 25-year warranty at no cost. Go to www.info.solarcrowdsource.com/skc-share-the-sun for more information and to apply.

DO YOU QUALIFY?



YOUR ROOF MUST BE LESS THAN 10 YEARS OLD



YOU MUST MAKE LESS THAN 60% AMI*

Household Size	2021 Household Income
1	\$40,680
2	\$46,500
3	\$52,320
4	\$58,080
5	\$62,760
6	\$67,380
7	\$72,060
8	\$76,680

*AREA MEDIAN INCOME



Share the Sun is brought to Kansas City, MO by the following organizations with generous support from the KCMO Government and Metropolitan Energy Center



Part-Time Child Care Jobs Now Hiring!

North Kansas City
Kansas City Public Schools
Center
Hickman Mills
Grandview

LINC Caring Communities Sites
Contact: Carol Green, (816) 739-9314, cgreen@klinc.org
Apply: klinc.org/jobs

The reward has been raised to **\$30,000** for Dominic



GREATER KANSAS CITY CRIME STOPPERS
816-474-TIPS HOTLINE

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FROM: Det. Kevin Boehm, Crime Stoppers Coordinator

SUBJECT: Reward Increase - 9 Year Old Dominic Young Homicide

KANSAS CITY, MO --- The Kansas City, Missouri Police Department and the Greater KC Crime Stoppers TIPS Hotline continue to seek information in the January 20, 2018 homicide of 9 year old Dominic Young Jr. at 71 Highway and Emanuel Cleaver II Blvd.

Dominic Young Jr. was apparently hit by a stray gunshot while occupying a vehicle driven by his father and died as a result of his injuries. Dominic, his father and brother were en route to Grandview at the time. The vehicle driven by Dominic's father was hit by gunshots from other vehicles apparently engaged in a gunfight according to statements.

KCPD found a possible crime scene near the intersection where the father said the shooting happened. When the father arrived home in Grandview, Dominic was not responsive. Grandview police initially responded to the father's home and found the boy in critical condition. He was later pronounced dead at a hospital.

A number of community leaders and organizations including State Representative Richard Brown, former City Councilmen Kevin McManus, Scott Taylor, Scott Wagner, John Sharp; the City of KCMO and Concord Fortress of Hope Church (Pastor Ron Lindsay) have come forward to increase the existing reward in the case up to \$30,000.00. Those leaders are available for comment in regard to the case.

Anyone with information is urged to contact Crime Stoppers Greater Kansas City TIPS Hotline at 816-474-TIPS (8477), TIPS may also be submitted electronically at www.KCcrimestoppers.com, or by downloading our NEW mobile app, P3TIPS, on Google Play or the Apple iOS stores for FREE. Information leading to an arrest and/or filing of charges could be eligible for up to \$30,000.00 in reward money. ALL INFORMATION IS ANONYMOUS.



Remain Anonymous • Receive Cash Rewards

Tips Hotline

816-474-8477

Web Tips

www.KCcrimestoppers.com

Free Mobile App

www.P3Tips.com

* A program of the KC Metropolitan Crime Commission

My office in Jefferson City is available to assist you with questions you may have about state government or legislative issues. Please call, email or write anytime. If you are unable to reach me, my assistant, Donna Gentsch is ready to help you. If you are in Jefferson City, come by my Capitol office in room 134, and introduce yourself. The door is always open and I encourage you to visit.

Please forward this email to your friends and family who want to know how what is happening in Jefferson City will impact them here at home.

Rep. Richard Brown

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Please don't hesitate to contact me with any feedback, questions or ideas!

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